Frequently asked questions

Q. I need to have an accountant?
A. No. But if you do have an accountant and your accounts have been certified, we probably won't need to see receipts and invoices

Q. I am a sub-contractor. Do you treat me as being self-employed?
A. No. If you have Income Tax and/or National Insurance contributions deducted from your wages then you are not self-employed

Q. I am a company director. Do you treat me as being self-employed?
A. No. You should have Income Tax and/or National Insurance contributions deducted from your wages so you are not self-employed

Q. Why can't you base my claim on the amount of money I am drawing out of the business each week?
A. We can't do this because your self-employed income must be based on the profit you are making

Q. Can you use the figure shown on my Tax return?
A. No. Certain expenses that are taken into account for tax purposes are not allowed for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit purposes

Q. What if I have just started up my business?
A. You should give us an estimate for the first two or three months of trading using a Self-Employed Earnings Form (excluding expenses for setting up the business) based on what you think your income will be. Once your claim has been assessed, we will write to you again asking for actual amounts

How to contact us

- In person:
  Town Hall, Chapel Road, Worthing

  Opening hours:
  8.45am to 4.45pm Monday to Thursday
  8.45am to 4.15pm on Fridays

- Phone: 01903 221062
- Minicom: 01903 216500
- Fax: 01903 216551
- E-mail: Revsbens@worthing.gov.uk

- Postal address:
  PO Box 5000
  Town Hall
  Worthing
  West Sussex
  BN11 1JN

Housing Benefit And Council Tax Benefit

A guide for Self-Employed customers

Worthing
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Who can claim?

All self-employed earners can claim Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Second Adult Rebate.

What we ask you to do

We need to see original documentary evidence of your self-employed income and expenses. Generally, we will accept

- Your most recent profit and loss accounts that have been audited
- Your most recent unaudited accounts
- A completed Self Employed Earnings Form

If you are unable to provide audited accounts, we will also need to see the receipts and invoices for the same period that you provide details of your income and expenditure.

We will not accept an unstructured collection of receipts and invoices and will ask you to put them into easy to understand format (usually by filling in a Self Employed Earnings Form and ensuring that the amounts given on the form correspond to your receipts).

What we will do

We will work out your self-employed income (deducting any allowable expenses) and then deduct any notional Income Tax and National Insurance amounts.

Which expenses can be deducted?

We will only deduct expenses that are purely for business purposes and we will adjust any amounts that include personal use (for example, telephone or motoring expenses). We will not allow expenses unless you provide receipts for them.

The expenses that are allowable will depend on the type of business you have, but the following items may be deducted

- Purchases of stocks and supplies
- Stationary costs
- Motoring expenses
- Rental costs and gas, electricity and water rates charges (but not for your home)
- Telephone and internet charges
- Bank charges
- Postage and packing
- Employees' wages
- Hire purchase and leasing costs
- Subscriptions to professional or trade organisations
- Legal fees and accountancy charges
- Capital repayments on loans used to replace equipment or machinery
- Costs to repair business assets
- Interest payments on a business loan
- Advertising costs
- Proven bad debts

Which expenses will not be deducted?

We are not able to deduct the following expenses

- Any costs associated with personal use
- Any money that you draw out of the business
- Any costs that relate to the setting up or expansion of the business
- Depreciation
- Business entertainment costs
- Capital repayments on a business loan

Business Partnerships

If you have a business partner, we will split the profit equally between the partners, unless evidence is provided to confirm a different percentage.

Child minders

We only need to see evidence of your income, and not your expenses. Your self-employed earnings will then be worked out using one-third of your gross income, less notional Income Tax and National Insurance contributions.

Pension contributions

If you make payments towards a pension plan and provide evidence, we will deduct half of the contributions from your self-employed earnings.